

The new

MONKEY ISLAND

by

Ron Gilbert

The story I'm about to tell you started long before I came into it. I entered somewhere around the middle, just when things started to go from strange to downright weird.

It all began a few years ago when a very famous Pirate -- by the name LeChuck -- fell in love with the beautiful Governor of the Island of Méléé. The Governor had taken over the Island from her father, a very well-liked ruler, when he died of a sudden illness. Her popularity grew until her command of the Island and brilliance as a ruler could be questioned by no one. The Pirates that lived on the Island learned to respect her with a faith equal to, if not greater than, that which they had bestowed on her father. All seemed to be perfect in this remote region of the Caribbean.

The Pirate LeChuck, while out tormenting the Spanish, French, English, or whomever he could find roaming the open seas, came upon Méléé. He was tired and his ship and crew were in dire need of repair and rest. Méléé always welcomed visitors and LeChuck's crew found what they needed most.

Being a well-known Pirate, LeChuck was asked to dine at the Governor's Mansion on the first evening. He was quite taken by the Governor and by the end of the evening proposed marriage. The Governor refused the offer as politely as possible, explaining that ruling the Island was her first priority and it required her full attention. The truth was she didn't really like the Pirate LeChuck.

The Pirate LeChuck took the rejection and left the Island. As the next few months turned into years he continued to return to Méléé in the hopes of changing the beautiful Governor's mind. His feelings turned from admiration to desperation to obsession. The Island lookout was soon told to warn of LeChuck's approaching ship and the guards were not to let him onto the Island.

The Pirate LeChuck continued to try and prove his worthiness to the Governor by increasingly daring voyages and foolish deeds. His feelings turned to jealousy and he started to torment ships coming from and bound for Mêleé. In a last-ditch effort, the Pirate LeChuck announced he was going to sail to the legendary Monkey Island and return with its secret. The secret was unknown, but legends value it as priceless. This effort would have also gone unnoticed by the Governor if not for its outcome.

A few weeks after setting sail, a strange storm appeared and engulfed the ship. The vessel was thrown upon a reef and the entire crew, including the Pirate LeChuck, were killed.

The Governor mourned only the loss of attention. The truth is she was glad to be rid of him and hoped life on the Pirate Island of Mêleé would return to normal. This was not meant to be.

The Pirate ships of Mêleé continued to be tormented, but this time by a far more sinister force than Pirate LeChuck. Soon after his death, and by coincidence some will swear, a ghost ship started sailing the seas in the dead of night. No ships were immune to being boarded by the ghost ship, but it seemed to prey on the ships of Mêleé more than on others. The sightings continued for some time and appeared to be moving closer to the Governor's Island.

The Pirates of Mêleé had feared Pirate LeChuck, but they always had a even chance at outrunning or beating him in a fair sea-battle. The ghost ship was unbeatable and was merciless towards the captured crew. It was not long before the Pirates of Mêleé refused to set sail and spent day and night on the Island. The Governor sent out many calls for a crew, which would be led by her, to hunt down and destroy the ghost ship, but none were willing.

This is where I came into the story. I was tired of my life in England and had decided to journey to the Caribbean in search of the Pirate's life. I was a young man of twenty and had much to learn. If one was serious about apprenticing to become a pirate, Mêleé was the place to go. The news of the ghost ship had not reached the old world and I set off unaware of what was happening.

I arrived on Mêleé one evening and began my training to become a Pirate. I was given three trials by a less-than-enthusiastic group of Pirate leaders and accomplished them with little effort. During my questing I had the opportunity to meet, and fall in love with, the Governor of Mêleé. It was no wonder the Pirate LeChuck was so taken with her. I was luckier than he was, it seemed that she had taken a liking to me as well. After rescuing me from the harbor, she told me of the Pirate LeChuck and the ghost ship. I, not being a real Pirate, was unable to help her. When I returned to the town with the last of my three trials completed I was

confronted with a terrifying sight. Sailing off into the distance was the ghost ship. I headed for the local bar and was told of the kidnapping of the Governor by the Ghost Pirate LeChuck.

They had set sail for Monkey Island; and if I was going to find her I had to follow. Putting together a crew proved to be difficult. As much as they loved the Governor, they were all much too afraid to follow in pursuit. I scoured the Island looking for a crew and found only three who were willing to make the journey to Monkey Island.

We set sail the next morning....

The voyage to Monkey Island presented only one major obstacle: None of us knew how to get there. As luck would have it, the ship we had purchased had been owned by a pair of Pirates who set out in search of Monkey Island a few years earlier. (Rumor has it that the ship returned to Mêleé sailed by a crew of chimps and the two Pirates were no where to be seen ... but that is another story). We found a map to Monkey Island which turned out to be a recipe for a voodoo incantation that would sail the ship to Monkey Island for us. We were not ones to complain and went along for the ride. The fumes from the boiling pot soon overcame us and we all blacked out.

I awoke the next morning to find the ship sitting off of what I could only assume was Monkey Island. The rest of my crew was still out cold and I could find no way to revive them. I managed to get to shore and start out upon my task of finding the Governor.

My journey led me to a group of natives who showed me an entrance down into the depths of what could only be described as hell. I had learned from the natives and the fortune teller on Mêleé that there was a special root, grown on only one Island, that could destroy the ghost and send their souls to rest. To my disappointment, I also learned the Ghost Pirate LeChuck had found the very last one and kept it well-guarded on his ship. Finding the ship and taking possession of the root became my quest.

With the help of the severed head-of-the-navigator, so generously loaned to me by the natives, I found the the Ghost Pirates LeChuck's ship. The head-of-the-navigator was wrapped in a necklace of eyeballs to render it invisible to the ghosts. I borrowed the necklace and invisibly set foot onto the ghost ship. Finding and recovering the root presented only the slightest of problems for me. While on the ghost ship I saw no sign of the Governor and I could only imagine that she was ok.

To bring out its destructive powers, the root had to be returned to the natives for a secret ritual. I hurried back to the village and watched as the root was

transformed into the ghost-killing machine I had hoped it would become. I grabbed the root and headed back into the center of the earth. My excitement was overshadowed by my shock when I found the Ghost Pirate LeChuck's ship missing. One laughing ghost remained and took great pleasure in telling me the Ghost Pirate LeChuck and the Governor had sailed back to Méléé to be wed in the only church in the Caribbean. I knew this more-than-symbolic pairing would mean the Governor would never be free again.

I returned to my ship and found my crew-wide-awake playing cards with a chimp. We set sail for Méléé with the ghost ship always in sight.

We arrived only a hour after the Ghost Pirate LeChuck; and I made my way through the ghost-controlled streets of Méléé using my root to cut down anyone who dared stop me. I was surprised how well it worked. When I reached Low Street, I was confronted by the Governor's personal Sheriff. I seems he was in cohorts with the ghosts and was determined to stop me from reaching the church. He was quite skilled with his sword but my wit prevailed and I won ... barely.

I arrived and burst into the church just in time to hear the minister say "If there is anyone who knows any reason why these two should not be joined in holy matrimony, speak now or for ever hold his peace." I blurted out "Because one of them is dead!!"

It's a real creepy thing to have a whole church full of dead guys turn around and stare at you....

A few moments passed as the church lay in silence, then from the rafters above, the Governor I had come to rescue leapt down and landed in front of me. "I had everything under control until you burst in here!" she said in a tone that reflected our new, possibly hopeless, situation. The Ghost Pirate LeChuck, still at the altar, quickly lifted the veil of who he thought was his life (and death) long love. He turned white as this revealed the face of none other than the chimp who had won all that money playing cards with my crew.

"You'd better have found the anti-root, or we're in a lot of trouble," the Governor said to me. I responded "I did, and we're not." The next few minutes consisted of me laying waste to about thirty ghosts and their one guest. The only ones to walk out of the church alive (or dead) were the Governor, the Chimp and myself. And to this day I still wonder where that chimp learned to play poker so well.